



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Andrea James-
Campbell and Kyle Piazza,
Rehabilitation Counselor, Mental
Health (PS2660H), Greystone Park
Psychiatric Hospital

Examination Appeals

CSC Docket Nos. 2021-1757 and 2021-
1586

ISSUED: JULY 2, 2021 (SLK)

Andrea James-Campbell and Kyle Piazza appeal the determinations of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) that they did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Rehabilitation Counselor, Mental Health (PS2660H), Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital.

The subject examination's closing date was March 23, 2020. The education requirement was a Bachelor's degree with 24 credits in any combination of vocational counseling, rehabilitation counseling, psychology, sociology, social work, vocational guidance, special education or related areas. The experience requirements were one year of experience in vocational/rehabilitation guidance or counseling, other related guidance and counseling, or social or medical casework in a rehabilitation agency, facility or other social program designed to increase the employability or social productivity of clients. A Master's degree in any of the above areas may be substituted for one year of the experience indicated above. Applicants who possessed 24 semester hour credits listed above but who did not possess the Bachelor's degree could substitute additional experience for the remaining education on a year-for-year basis, with one year of experience equal to 30 semester hour credits. Further, the announcement indicated that applicants must attach a copy of their transcript to their application and that failure to do would result in rejection from the examination process. A total of 20 employees applied and two were determined eligible. It is noted that there are currently five employees provisionally serving in the subject title including James-Campbell and Piazza. Certification PS210475 was issued

containing the names of the two eligibles and its disposition is due August 5, 2021. The list expires on April 28, 2024.

On her application, James-Campbell indicated that she had 90 college credits. She also indicated that she was an Instructor Counselor from September 2018 to the March 23, 2020 closing date, a Senior Therapy Program Assistant from January 2016 to October 2018, a Therapy Program Assistant from June 2015 to January 2016, and a Senior Therapy Program Assistant from December 2000 to June 2014. Personnel records indicates that James-Campbell was provisionally appointed to the subject title after the closing date, an Instructor Counselor from July 2018 to the March 23, 2020 closing date, a Senior Therapy Program Assistant from January 2016 to July 2018, a Therapy Program Assistant from June 2015 to July 2016, a Senior Therapy Program Assistant from December 2000 to June 2015, a Cottage Training Technician from June 1998 to December 2000, and a Human Services Assistant from June 1994 to June 1998. Agency Services credited her with having 90 college credits and 21 specialized college credits¹ and having one year and seven months of experience based on her Instructor Counselor service, but determined that she lacked 3 specialized credits and five months of experience.²

On his application, Piazza indicated that he had a Bachelor's degree. He also indicated that he was a Senior Therapy Program Assistant from September 2010 to the March 23, 2020 closing date, a Football/Wrestling Official from June 2016 to the March 23, 2020 closing date, a Cottage Training Technician from September 2003 to September 2010, a Substitute Teacher for Broward County School District from September 2000 to May 2002, and an Assistant Director of Media/Sales for Holiday Destinations/Mortgage Concierge Group from April 1998 to September 2000. Personnel records indicates that Piazza was provisionally appointed to the subject title after the closing date, a Senior Therapy Program Assistant from March 2018 to the March 23, 2020 closing date, a Therapy Program Assistant from January 2015 to March 2018, a Senior Therapy Assistant from August 2011 to January 2015, a Cottage Training Technician from April 2004 to August 2011, and a Human Services Assistant from September 2003 to 2004. Agency Services credited him for having a Bachelor's degree with 24 specialized credits, but determined that he lacked one year of experience.

On appeal, James-Campbell presents that she has an Associate's degree in psychology with 90 credits and she highlights that applicants with 24 credits in the required specialized areas who do not have a Bachelor's degree may substitute additional experience for education.

¹ Agency Services credited James-Campbell for PS-101, PS-102, PS-203, PS-205, PS-208, PS-209, and SO-101.

² As James-Campbell has 90 college credits and not a Bachelor's degree, per the substitution clause, she needed two years of experience instead of one.

Piazza presents the 24 credits that he has in psychology and sociology. He describes how from 2002 to 2014 he helped patients be taught vocational skills so that they could obtain employment. Piazza also describes how from 2014 to 2016 while working in the special treatment unit, he would run vocational groups for residents on janitorial duties and fence line work or grounds works. He explains how he taught the group relationship skills such as cooperation, showing respect, having a great attitude, active listening, appropriate contact or boundaries while employed, job applying and interview skills, computer skills, and other skills related to obtaining and holding employment. Piazza states that since 2016, he has worked in the creative employment center where he taught vocational skills to patients while hospitalized and he describes the duties that he performed. He presents how he counseled patients on an individual basis to provide them the guidance they will need upon discharge for their rehabilitation or vocational needs.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the promotional announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.6(c) provides that, except when permitted for good cause, applicants for promotional examinations with open-competitive requirements may not use experience gained as a result of out-of-title work to satisfy the requirements for admittance to the examination or for credit in the examination process. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.2(c) states that the Civil Service Commission (Commission) may relax a rule for good cause in order to effectuate the purpose of Title 11A, New Jersey Statutes. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

Under *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(g), the Civil Service Commission (Commission) can accept clarifying information in eligibility appeals. For example, information submitted on appeal pertaining to duties in a given position that expands or enlarges information previously submitted is considered clarifying and is accepted. However, any documentation indicating work in a setting that was not previously listed on an application or resume cannot be considered after the closing date. Thus, the Commission can only consider information provided on appeal regarding the positions listed on the appellant's original application. *See In the Matter of Diana Begley* (MSB, decided November 17, 2004).

Initially, it is noted that Agency Services correctly determined that James-Campbell and Piazza were ineligible for the subject examination as they did not clearly articulate that they performed the required duties as Senior Therapy Program Assistants, and if they had, the required duties in this title would be considered out-of-title work. Concerning James-Campbell, a review of her transcript indicates that she has 27 credits in the specialized required areas.³ Regarding Piazza, he clarifies

³ A review of James-Campbell's transcript does not indicate PS 205, but does indicate PS-206 and S0-202.

that he began performing required duties upon his appointment as a Senior Therapy Assistant. However, James-Campbell and Piazza continue to serve provisionally in the subject title and the eligible list is incomplete as there are only two eligibles. Accordingly, in this matter, the Commission finds good cause to accept the appellants' provisional experience after the closing date, for eligibility purposes only, and admit them to the examination.

This determination is limited to the instant matter and does not provide precedent in any other matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that the appeal be granted, and Andrea James-Campbell's and Kyle Piazza's application be processed for prospective employment opportunities only.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON
THE 30TH DAY OF JUNE, 2021

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